

# EPA Region III

Office of Public Affairs

## EARLY BIRD HEADLINES

Wednesday, May 30, 2012

### \*\*\* MORNING HOT LIST \*\*\*

#### In coal country, fighting for the industry's future

**NEW YORK TIMES** LOUISA, Ky. -- For generations, coal has been king in this Appalachian town. It provided heat, light and jobs for the hundreds of people who worked in the nearby coal mines and the smoke-coughing Big Sandy power plant that burned their black bounty. But now, coal is in a corner. Across the United States, the industry is under siege, threatened by new regulations from Washington, environmentalists fortified by money from New York City's billionaire Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and natural gas firms intent on capturing much of the nation's energy market. So when the operator of the Big Sandy plant announced last year that it would be switching from coal to cleaner, cheaper natural gas, people in Louisa took it as the worst betrayal imaginable. "Have you lost your mind?" Democratic state Rep. Rocky Adkins, one of Kentucky's most powerful politicians, thundered at Michael G. Morris, the chairman of the plant's operator, American Electric Power, during an encounter last summer. "You cannot wave the white flag and let the environmentalists and regulators declare victory here in the heart of coal country." Coal and electric utilities, long allied, are starting to split. More than 100 of the 500 or so U.S. coal-burning power plants are expected to be shut down in the next few years. While coal still provides about a third of the nation's power, just four years ago it was providing nearly half. The decline is largely because new pollution rules have made coal plants more costly, while a natural gas production surge through hydraulic fracturing, known as fracking, has sent gas prices plummeting. Together, the economics of coal have been transformed after a century of dominance in Washington, state capitals and the board rooms of electric utilities.

#### Editorial: Protect river's fish population

**WILKES-BARRE CITIZENS' VOICE** Last summer Gov. Tom Corbett paddled a kayak on the Susquehanna River in Northeastern Pennsylvania, at least partly to emphasize the big river's environmental and recreational viability amid the Marcellus Shale gas boom. A major element of the river's recreational appeal lies in smallmouth bass fishing. Well downstream from the governor's outing last year the fish population is deeply troubled. Outdoor recreation is big business in Pennsylvania. It's worth about \$4 billion a year, according to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. And that's just a portion of overall tourism spending that relies heavily on natural assets like the Susquehanna, other rivers and waterways, state parks and so on. The health of the Susquehanna includes a more fundamental public policy component - environmental stewardship - regardless of the river's economic contribution. As John Arway, executive director of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, put it last week during a Senate Game and Fisheries Committee hearing: "Sick fish mean we have a sick river." Since 2005, the once-thriving Susquehanna smallmouth bass fishery has declined. In a 100-mile stretch, from the confluence of the east and west branches north of Sunbury to the Holtwood Dam above Harrisburg, large numbers of fish have exhibited bacterial infections. Summertime water temperatures have been recorded in the 90s. There have been algae blooms and other problems, including contamination from pesticides and other agricultural chemicals, and from human medications and personal care products.

#### Mattawoman Creek at "turning point"

**BALTIMORE SUN** The fate of the Chesapeake Bay may be found in its tributaries. Mattawoman Creek,

one of the bay's healthiest, is losing ground to development and now stands "at a turning point" as Charles County plans for future growth in its watershed, a state-led task force warns. The combined state-federal task force, led by the Department of Natural Resources, says that the Mattawoman is losing the "near to the ideal" condition that characterized its waters nearly two decades ago. Although its watershed is still largely forested, and the stream itself retains one of the state's most diverse populations of fish, "possible signs of stress associated with human development have appeared." Dissolved oxygen in the water, thought still good, has declined of late, and some fish spawning sites have been lost, the report says. The signs of stress have appeared as the percentage of the watershed covered by asphalt or buildings has grown, according to the task force. Fish populations have declined markedly since around 2000, it notes, and warns that at the county's current projected levels of development for the watershed, fish spawning may disappear altogether. The report comes not long after state and federal regulators denied the county's bid to build an east-west highway that would have cut across part of the watershed. The task force urges Charles County officials to dramatically downscale planned development in the Mattawoman watershed as they update the county's long-range "comprehensive plan" for growth. The report produced with staff from state planning, environment and highways, along with federal environmental agencies, was published in March. Environmental activists, in a release issued late last week, say the county's response to date has been discouraging, as the planning commission last month opted to stick with provisions in the county's 2006 growth plan that they contend will continue development in the Mattawoman watershed, which could seal its fate.

## **Contaminants in Susquehanna River affecting fish, Pa. commission says**

**WHYY NEWSWORKS** The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission says the Susquehanna River might seem healthy according to data used by the Department of Environmental Protection. But for the average fisherman, signs of poor water quality abound. They include high levels of algae taking up more of the water's oxygen; white lesions on young smallmouth bass; and intersex fish, with male and female sexual characteristics, due to contaminants in the water such as ... hand sanitizer. The river should be deemed "impaired" by DEP so the state can start the studies needed to get to the bottom of poor water quality, says John Arway, commission director. "The river's in trouble. I hope you understand, the river's in trouble," he said. "Sick fish mean we have a sick river. I think you've seen the pictures, you've seen the data we've developed. We've got sick fish in the river." The DEP's take on the Susquehanna's health is different, since it uses other criteria. It doesn't test fish, but macro invertebrates such as worms, snails, and insects. Fishing and boating account for 18,000 jobs in Pennsylvania, and \$120 million annually in state and local tax revenues, according to the commission.

## **Natural Gas Golden Age is Threatened by Pollution, IEA Says**

**BLOOMBERG BUSINESS NEWS** A tripling of natural-gas production from unconventional sources, such as shale formations, will only happen if environmental concerns are addressed, according to the International Energy Agency. Annual extraction from unconventional resources may rise to 1.6 trillion cubic meters in 2035 to account for 32 percent of all gas production, up from 14 percent this year, the IEA said in an e-mailed report released today. That figure will only be reached if companies and regulators are transparent, monitor environmental impacts and take the concerns of local communities seriously, according to the report. "The concerns of local communities are legitimate ones," Fatih Birol, chief economist at the IEA in Paris, said in a telephone interview yesterday. "There are some companies that are following the rules we are suggesting here. The destiny of the shale-gas industry will be decided not by the best practices but by the worst practices." Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, the practice of pumping water, sand and chemicals into wells to extract gas from hard-to-exploit shale rock, helped the U.S. overtake Russia as the world's biggest producer of the fuel. The global potential of shale resources has been stymied after France and Bulgaria banned the practice and activity was suspended in the U.K. More than 20 towns in New York state have adopted laws to ban drilling, according to Karen Edelstein, a geographic information-systems consultant in Ithaca, New York.

## **Senate panel OKs bill to encourage mine water for fracking**

**HAZELTON STANDARD-SPEAKER** HARRISBURG - A bill to encourage use of coal mine water in hydrofracking operations by offering liability protection to drillers won approval last week from a Senate committee. The vote by the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee comes as state environmental officials are developing policies to offer Marcellus Shale drillers incentives to tap hundreds of millions of gallons of acid mine drainage. The goal of these policies is to couple the natural gas industry's need for massive amounts of water in hydrofracking operations and the long-standing problem of cleaning up 5,000 miles of waterway in Pennsylvania impaired by acid mine drainage. Using mine water will have the added benefit of conserving freshwater sources that are currently being tapped for drilling operations, said Sen. Richard Kasunic, D-32, Dunbar, sponsor of the bill that now goes to the Senate floor. The measure provides that operators acquiring mine water would not be held liable for costs, injuries or damages from using mine drainage, mine pool water or treated mine water in hydrofracking. "The cost of abating, and the liability associated with the perpetual treatment of these mine pools can often run into the millions of dollars," Kasunic said. "Without limiting these potential costs, it is highly unlikely the industry will consider using this alternative water source." The Marcellus Shale Coalition, an industry trade group, recently commissioned a study on mine water use by the RAND Corporation. The study released last month concludes that using mine water is technically viable because it's abundant, many sources are close to drilling areas and most of the water would require just modest pre-treatment.

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## PENNSYLVANIA

### **PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE**

Daily rainfall record set on heels of storms The band of thunderstorms that rolled through Western Pennsylvania Tuesday was "pretty typical" -- except that it set a record, meteorologists said. As a western cold front moved in, about 1.29 inches of rain fell on Pittsburgh International Airport, the official measuring spot. The previous record of 1.05 inches of rainfall on May 29 of any given year was set in 1883, when meteorologists took their tallies at a First National Bank near the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Wood Street, Downtown. "This is fairly typical for what we'd [expect to] have this time of year," said Tom Green, a meteorologist at the National Weather Service in Moon. Forecasters predict that another storm brewing in the Central Plains will arrive in Pittsburgh late Thursday night, possibly producing another inch of rain as it hovers in the area through part of Friday night. Across the region, county dispatchers said they received calls for downed tree limbs and minor mudslides from Tuesday's storm. None resulted in significant injuries. A small mudslide occurred on Ben Avon Heights Road in Ohio Township, prompting a response from road crews but causing no road closures. A few homes were damaged during the midafternoon storms, many in the North Hills. Scott Lewandowski of Ross said his mother-in-law called him about 1:30 p.m. to tell him an 80-foot oak tree had tumbled onto the roof of the Main Boulevard house he and his wife were scheduled to move into in two weeks.

Advocates push green solutions for Hazelwood runoff issue Tuesday afternoon's storm served as a fitting backdrop as a little school bus made stops in Hazelwood with city Councilman Corey O'Connor aboard. Each stop is a potential site for street-level stormwater collection infrastructure proposed by members of Action United and the Clean Rivers Campaign. Action United is a nonprofit that has chapters statewide and has been organizing residents in Hazelwood to work on neighborhood improvement projects that would turn eyesores into neighborhood assets that reduce storm runoff. The Clean Rivers Campaign is an educational collaboration of advocacy groups that sprang from Alcosan's consent decree to comply with the U.S. Clean Water Act by 2026. Jennifer England, communications director for Action United and Pittsburgh United, said Alcosan's remedies are large scale, with a need for huge investment that will take years. "But green solutions can start to make a dent now" and incrementally make more dents, she said. "These seemingly simple methods can help the region meet its consent decree requirements while costing less than traditional methods, creating more long-term jobs and providing extra benefits to communities like Hazelwood." Mr. O'Connor said he is planning a meeting with union leaders "to get young people trained in these fields to do this work here. Some of our Hazelwood kids have had tough times, and if we can get them into labor jobs, they would have long-term work, not just in Hazelwood." Without price tags or sponsors, these target projects were chosen "to present a picture of what green could look like and mean to this community," said Bill Bartlett, Action United's organizer here: <http://www.centredaily.com/2012/02/08/3082316/company-wants-to-buy-public-rail.html#storylink=cpy>

## **HAZELTON STANDARD SPEAKER**

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## **WILKES-BARRE CITIZENS VOICE**

Editorial: Protect river's fish population Last summer Gov. Tom Corbett paddled a kayak on the Susquehanna River in Northeastern Pennsylvania, at least partly to emphasize the big river's environmental and recreational viability amid the Marcellus Shale gas boom. A major element of the river's recreational appeal lies in smallmouth bass fishing. Well downstream from the governor's outing last year the fish population is deeply troubled. Outdoor recreation is big business in Pennsylvania. It's worth about \$4 billion a year, according to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. And that's just a portion of overall tourism spending that relies heavily on natural assets like the Susquehanna, other rivers and waterways, state parks and so on. The health of the Susquehanna includes a more fundamental public policy component - environmental stewardship - regardless of the river's economic contribution. As John Arway, executive director of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, put it last week during a Senate Game and Fisheries Committee hearing: "Sick fish mean we have a sick river." Since 2005, the once-thriving Susquehanna smallmouth bass fishery has declined. In a 100-mile stretch, from the confluence of the east and west branches north of Sunbury to the Holtwood Dam above Harrisburg, large numbers of fish have exhibited bacterial infections. Summertime water temperatures have been recorded in the 90s. There have been algae blooms and other problems, including contamination from pesticides and other agricultural chemicals, and from human medications and personal care products.

## **ERIE TIMES-NEWS**

Our view: Erie can become more bike-friendly Many trends go in cycles, but we're glad to hear about one that's coming around in Erie. As John Guerriero reported May 19, Erie is starting to become a bike-friendly community.

Nature's Way: Natural history collection comes together in Erie Pittsburgh is where I've always liked to go to learn about our peninsula, as most of us Erieites call Presque Isle State Park. It was there where I could find more scientific facts about it than I could in Erie and the surrounding area.

## **WHYY NEWSWORKS**

Contaminants in Susquehanna River affecting fish, Pa. commission says The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission says the Susquehanna River might seem healthy according to data used by the Department of Environmental Protection. But for the average fisherman, signs of poor water quality abound. They include high levels of algae taking up more of the water's oxygen; white lesions on young smallmouth bass; and intersex fish, with male and female sexual characteristics, due to contaminants in the water such as ... hand sanitizer. The river should be deemed "impaired" by DEP so the state can start the studies needed to get to the bottom of poor water quality, says John Arway, commission

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### **ASSOCIATED PRESS (Pa.)**

Shale-gas researcher is drawing criticism PITTSBURGH - A well-known expert on the natural gas boom is again facing criticism over his ties to industry and a lack of transparency in how he presents work to the public, fueling debates over research that has been published by major universities. Timothy Considine was lead author on a shale gas report recently issued by the University at Buffalo and a previous report from Pennsylvania State University. Critics say both reports presented research in misleading ways and failed to fully disclose funding sources. Considine, now at the University of Wyoming, has received funding from industry groups such as the Marcellus Shale Coalition, the Wyoming Mining Association, the American Iron and Steel Institute, and the American Petroleum Institute. On Thursday, the Public Accountability Initiative, a Buffalo nonprofit, issued a critique of the study by the University at Buffalo's Shale Resources and Society Institute. "Taken together, the serious flaws in the report, industry-friendly spin, strong industry ties, and fund-raising plans raise serious questions about the Shale Resources and Society Institute's independence and the University at Buffalo's decision to lend its independent, academic authority to the Institute's work," the critique said. Some say Considine and the University at Buffalo could easily have avoided the controversies over transparency. "It sounds like a moral blind spot," said Stephen Satris, a professor of philosophy at the Clemson University Rutland Institute for Ethics. In 2010, Penn State administrators retracted the original version of a report on the economic impact of Marcellus Shale natural gas, noting that Considine and his coauthors made "a clear error" in not disclosing that the report was funded by an industry group, as well as "flaws in the way the report was written and presented to the public." This week, the University at Buffalo published a correction to Considine's report on environmental regulations involving the Marcellus Shale, noting that an initial assertion that it went through an independent peer-review process "may have given readers an incorrect impression." The University at Buffalo also said the report "was not funded or commissioned by external sources." But Considine told the Associated Press in an e-mail that the University of Wyoming paid him and two other lead authors. Considine said that the Wyoming funding was disclosed in a conference call with reporters and that he was just doing work as a tenured professor. That funding link was not acknowledged in the actual published report. Considine is the director of the University of Wyoming Center for Energy Economics and Public Policy.

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## **DELAWARE**

### **DELAWARE CAPE GAZETTE**

Delaware climbs bike-friendly list Get on your bikes and ride: For the first year ever, Delaware towered over 40 other states in a national list of places where bicycling is smiled upon. The League of American Bicyclists ranked Delaware the 10th most bicycle-friendly state in the nation. According to a May 22 press release from the league, Delaware achieved a higher rank this year thanks to plans for a multimodal transportation system, led by Gov. Jack Markell, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control and Delaware Department of Transportation. On May 12, 2011 state legislators passed a resolution to improve the health of their constituents and reduce transportation costs by asking DelDOT to fund a network of walkways and bike paths within and between towns in Delaware. The state unveiled a plan for 25 new trails or trail extensions throughout the state, May 17 in Lewes. The projects, including eight in Sussex County, will be funded through DelDOT and DNREC to the tune of \$13 million. "Trails and bike routes are a part of a vision for a state with interconnected communities," Markell said. "We will continue working to make Delaware an attractive place not only to bike but to live and work."

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## **WEST VIRGINIA**

### **CHARLESTON GAZETTE**

Blog: Romney flat in foray against Obama's 'war on coal' Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney's campaign turned today to the mining industry's much-hyped "war on coal" by President Obama, in a visit to Craig, Colo., billed as a chance for Romney to take on some of what the current administration's U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been up to over the last few years. But judging from some of the headlines I've seen this afternoon — In a Town on an Upswing, Romney Brings a Message of Economic Woe (the New York Times), Colorado Coal Town Not Feeling

Down (Wall Street Journal), and Romney Says Economy is 'A Little Better' In Spite of Obama Policies (ABC News) — things didn't exactly play out as Big Coal and the Romney campaign had hoped. In some ways, the campaign stop appeared set up well ... the Denver Post previewed the visit under the headline, "Mitt Romney to discuss coal regulation, small business in Craig on Tuesday," reporting:

New recycling center could open by August Sissonville, W.Va. -- Kanawha County solid waste officials could have a new recycling center up and running in Sissonville by the end of the summer. "My goal is to by mid-August to be up and in production," said Kanawha County Solid Waste Director Norm Steenstra. "I think we can move our equipment out and up here in a 10-day period and be up and ready to run." Last week, Solid Waste Authority board members voted to lease a three-acre facility near NGK in Sissonville as a new home for the county's recycling center. Solid waste officials were forced to stop operating the center at Slack Street in Charleston because of safety concerns in the 100-year-old building where they were sorting and packaging recyclables. Solid waste officials have been looking for a new home for the recycling center ever since. Although they started taking recycling materials on a limited basis last month, they still have no place to sort and pack materials except on the bare ground. Steenstra said the Sissonville site makes up about three acres and includes two buildings. Solid waste officials could lease one building, buy them both and lease one out or buy one building outright.

Patriot Coal ousts CEO Charleston, W.Va. -- Amid growing financial problems, Patriot Coal on Tuesday announced a leadership shakeup that includes the departure of CEO Richard M. Whiting and his replacement by company board chairman Irl Englehardt. Patriot also promoted Ben Hatfield, the company's chief operating officer, to the position of president, as part of a series of moves the company said would "improve its operating and financial structure."

Interstate lanes closed near Paint Creek Interstate 77 southbound was closed Tuesday afternoon for more than an hour after a tractor-trailer carrying hand cleaner wrecked near Paint Creek just after 3 p.m., according to Kanawha Metro 911 dispatchers. Emergency crews were still cleaning...

## **CHARLESTON DAILY MAIL**

Editorial: 'Clean' energy requires huge swaths of land Just one Facebook data center would take 5.5 square miles of turbines. Google, Facebook and the rest require vast computer banks to store all the data they collect. Data centers now consume 1.3 percent of the world's electricity, Robert Bryce of the Wall Street Journal reported. Within the next three years, that use will grow sixfold. Where will the power come from? Facebook's new data center in Prineville, Ore., covers 300,000 square feet. To put that in perspective, Laidley Tower covers 214,426 square feet. To power such an array of computers requires 28 megawatts of power, as much electricity as 28,000 homes would use. Greenpeace, a global environmental watchdog, recently graded Google, Facebook and other such computer firms on the greenness of their power choices. Greenpeace gave Facebook a "D" because so much of the power it uses comes from coal, nuclear and other unfashionable sources. But as Bryce pointed out, to "go green" at its facility in Prineville, Facebook would have to cover an area of nearly 5.5 square miles — equivalent to four Central Parks — with wind turbines. And that estimate is based on the assumption that the turbines would have 100 percent efficiency.

State reaches pollution settlements The state Department of Environmental Protection has reached proposed settlement agreements with a county development authority, a tire company, a recycler and a marble factory that allegedly violated environmental laws. The proposed agreements call for penalties ranging from \$4,690 to \$25,950. All of the agreements are posted online at [www.dep.wv.gov](http://www.dep.wv.gov). The department is seeking public comments. The deadline for filing comments varies. Here's a summary: \* The department said that during an Oct. 11, 2011, inspection of a Wheeling water supply construction site owned by the Ohio County Development Authority, personnel from the authority or its contractor were observed working in Wheeling Creek. The department said alleged water pollution permit violations occurred, including the creation of a distinctly visible brown plume of suspended solids.

## **PARKERSBURG NEWS AND SENTINEL**

Marietta firefighters stage mock rescues MARIETTA - A city employee is working 20 feet underground when suddenly an alarm goes off indicating that his oxygen supply is low. As he tries to get to higher ground his ladder breaks and he falls five to six feet, leaving him unconscious but still breathing. This is one scenario Marietta

firefighters were given and learned to respond to during a confined space rescue refresher course held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. "Every year they need an annual refresher - that's an OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) standard," said Akron firefighter David Ware, lead instructor with Cleveland State University's Center for Emergency Preparedness. "They've been through an entry class and initial rescue class and this is the annual recertification." Marietta Fire Chief C.W. Durham said although there aren't many times when a firefighter finds himself going into a confined space to rescue someone, it's still extremely important that all firefighters go through the training so they are prepared for such a scenario. He said a local plant is one place where firefighters might one day find themselves doing a confined space rescue. "They notify us anytime they're going to have confined space operations," Durham said. "It may be as simple as cleaning out one of their tanks."

## **WEST VIRGINIA STATE PUBLIC BROADCASTING**

Environmentalists, coal industry rally for supporters Mountain-top removal activists are gearing up for a new season of protests. Advocates on both ends of the argument met last week. Five locked their bodies to a barge on the Kanawha River near Chelyan, with a large banner that read "Coal leaves, cancer stays." According to a press release, dozens of concerned citizens blocked access to the haul road on Kayford Mountain, stopping coal trucks from entering or leaving the Republic Energy mine. The protest was organized by an environmental group called RAMPS - an acronym for Radical Action for Mountain People's Survival. The group is listed as a 'non-violent direct action campaign based in the southern coal fields of West Virginia.' Last summer, two women spent days perched on a piece of plywood sticking out of a tree eight feet in the air, also organized by RAMPS. The group is just one of the groups listed as an affiliate to Mountain Justice, a network of anti-mountain-top removal groups. Others in the network include Coal River Mountain Watch, Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, both in West Virginia, and others from Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee. The network hosts several training camps every year. The 2012 Summer Activist Training Camp was held in Summers County last week.

## **ASSOCIATED PRESS (W. Va.)**

DEP may levy \$26K fine for fouling of Middle Wheeling Creek WHEELING -- The Ohio County Development Authority may be fined nearly \$26,000 over pollution of Middle Wheeling Creek near Elm Grove. The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection says the fine is being considered for work done by Ohio-based Sugar Contracting. The DEP says workers failed to contain silt as they laid part of a 5-mile water line, causing a brown plume in the creek. Ohio County Administrator Greg Stewart says contractors must follow DEP rules, and Sugar will be responsible for any fines. He says the authority is on the permit because it got grant money for the project. Stewart tells The Intelligencer the authority can withhold final payment of \$200,000 until the fine is paid. DEP spokeswoman Kathy Cosco says no fish or wildlife was harmed.

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# **MARYLAND**

## **BALTIMORE SUN**

Mattawoman Creek at "turning point" The fate of the Chesapeake Bay may be found in its tributaries. Mattawoman Creek, one of the bay's healthiest, is losing ground to development and now stands "at a turning point" as Charles County plans for future growth in its watershed, a state-led task force warns. The combined state-federal task force, led by the Department of Natural Resources, says that the Mattawoman is losing the "near to the ideal" condition that characterized its waters nearly two decades ago. Although its watershed is still largely forested, and the stream itself retains one of the state's most diverse populations of fish, "possible signs of stress associated with human development have appeared." Dissolved oxygen in the water, thought still good, has declined of late, and some fish spawning sites have been lost, the report says. The signs of stress have appeared as the percentage of the watershed covered by asphalt or buildings has grown, according to the task force. Fish populations have declined markedly since around 2000, it notes, and warns that at the county's current projected levels of development for the watershed, fish spawning may disappear altogether. The report comes not long after state and federal regulators denied the county's bid to build an east-west highway that would have cut across part of the watershed. The task force urges Charles County officials to dramatically downscale planned development in the Mattawoman watershed as they update the county's long-range

"comprehensive plan" for growth. The report produced with staff from state planning, environment and highways, along with federal environmental agencies, was published in March. Environmental activists, in a release issued late last week, say the county's response to date has been discouraging, as the planning commission last month opted to stick with provisions in the county's 2006 growth plan that they contend will continue development in the Mattawoman watershed, which could seal its fate.

Lyme disease tick study stirs dispute Maryland families not fully informed of pesticide risks, critics say. Hundreds of Baltimore-area families have volunteered for a government study to spray their suburban yards with pesticide, which researchers hope can protect them from Lyme disease but that environmentalists warn is unsafe..

More Baltimore-area fish kills reported Dead fish continued to surface Tuesday in Baltimore-area waters, though the conditions that scientists believe have been causing the weeklong die-off may be moderating slightly. State investigators estimated there were 10,000 fish floating in Stoney Creek in northern Anne Arundel County and in its tributaries, Back Cove, Beehive Cove and Nabbs Creek, according to Samantha Kappalman, spokeswoman for the Maryland Department of the Environment. She emailed that "several thousand," mostly menhaden, were bunched up by the Fort Smallwood Road bridge. Stoney Creek is just a few miles from Marley Creek, where authorities reported last week finding 100,000 dead fish amid a massive "mahogany tide," or algae bloom that's suffocating fish throughout this portion of the Chesapeake Bay.

B'More Green: Survey finds local pollution oversight lacking Few inspectors to check on storm-water controls; Anne Arundel 'most severe.' If you create ponds and rain gardens to capture polluted runoff, will they work - and keep working? A recent survey of storm-water control facilities put in along the Severn River in Anne Arundel County found that a third of them were in good condition, but more - 43 percent - were either in poor shape or couldn't be found at all. That's what 26 volunteers for the Severn River Association found earlier this month when they fanned out to check up on 30 ponds, rain gardens and other controls meant to collect storm runoff, a major source of pollution for the river and the Chesapeake Bay as a whole. In a letter earlier this month to Anne Arundel County Executive John Leopold, association President Duane Wilding blamed the situation on a shortage of inspectors to check up on storm runoff controls. The county has cut its inspection staff from seven in 2001 to one today, while the number of storm-water ponds and other facilities has grown from 7,000 to 11,000, according to the letter and other information supplied by Richard Klein of Community & Environmental Defense Services.

## **SALISBURY DAILY TIMES**

Canoe trip highlights Onancock Creek quality ONANCOCK --A dozen people including representatives of local and state government took a canoe trip on Onancock Creek as part of an educational effort funded by a three-year federal grant which brought together more than a dozen partners in a multifaceted effort to reduce pollution in Onancock Creek. The trip was organized by the Eastern Shore Resource Conservation and Development Council, one of those partners. The creek was listed in the top 25 percent in bay watershed for nitrogen and phosphorus levels coming from both urban and agricultural sources, according to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. The canoe trip was an example of educational programs offered by the foundation. The Virginia Canoe Program is one of six educational programs the foundation operates in Virginia -- it operates 15 programs in all, involving 30,000 students a year. The foundation also offers five-day professional development trips each summer for teachers. "Students learn in different ways ... We've seen evidence that SOLs improve with this type of experiential learning," said Gwen Pearson, CBF's Virginia field general manager for education, who led the trip along with Virginia Canoe Program assistant manager Ben Eberline. Pearson and Eberline showed the group examples of activities schoolchildren participate in during canoe trips, including water quality testing and biotic testing. They also asked the group to observe different land uses along the shoreline and consider which are better for the creek's and bay's health. A test for dissolved oxygen measured nine parts per million, considered a good level. Most fish species require five parts per million or more to survive, Pearson said. Among factors that impact dissolved oxygen levels are temperature and nitrate and phosphate levels in the water, she said. In an example of biotic testing -- the term refers to living components of an ecosystem -- the group used seine nets to gather samples of organisms in the shallow waters along the shoreline. Seven species were found, including a baby croaker, a young jimmy crab, silverside minnows, a mummychawg, a needle fish, a razor clam and periwinkles.

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# VIRGINIA

## **ROANOKE TIMES**

U.S. 460 tanker spill kills Lynchburg man; cleanup could take weeks Traffic along a nearly mile-long section of U.S. 460 in Bedford County has been reduced to one lane in both directions — and could remain that way for weeks — following a fatal tanker truck crash near Montvale that spilled thousands of gallons of diesel fuel and gasoline. Adam Henry, of Lynchburg, the driver of the truck for Watts Petroleum, died at the scene of the crash after he lost control of the vehicle Monday night, said Sgt. Robert Carpentieri of the Virginia State Police. Henry was not wearing his seatbelt. Carpentieri said investigators still are looking into what caused the crash in the S-curves near Montvale Elementary School. “He definitely lost control, but what led up to that, I don’t know,” Carpentieri said Tuesday. About 6,700 gallons of fuel spilled in the crash, which closed 0.7 miles of eastbound U.S. 460 near Virginia 726, or Wilkerson Mill Road. Eastbound traffic has been rerouted onto one lane of westbound U.S. 460, with the other lane remaining open to westbound vehicles. Jason Bond, spokesman for the Virginia Department of Transportation, said the area has been designated a “long-term work zone” while workers remove soil contaminated by the fuel to prevent the gasoline and diesel from reaching the groundwater. “It could be weeks before it’s reopened,” Bond said Tuesday. About 15,000 vehicles travel that stretch of U.S. 460 each day, according to the department’s most recent traffic report, he said.

## **MANASSAS PATCH**

Manassas Participates in Clean the Bay Day City Square Cafe General Manager Robert Gaither was introduced to the city's environmental volunteer project and has taken the effort by storm with area youth by his side. Most local waterways lead to the Chesapeake Bay and that is why a volunteer project taking place in Manassas Saturday aims at cleaning up the floodway along the Winter's Branch Trail. The project's leader is Rob Gaither, General Manager at Old Town's City Square Cafe. Gaither said he was in need of a volunteer project for credit in a class he was taking as a senior at George Mason University. He contacted the city's Neighborhood Service Coordinator Christen Zenich, and they began working on the local Clean the Bay Day event. Gaither, of Manassas, said while he has volunteered before he has never served in a leadership role for a project. But that hasn't deterred him from taking on the challenge. "If I make the decision to do something, I stick with it and make sure it is done right," he said. But Gaither couldn't do it alone. He's enlisted the help of area youth; as of last week, had more than 40 youth volunteers signed up to pick up trash and other debris along the important Chesapeake Watershed creek in Manassas this Saturday from 9 a.m. to noon.

## **LYNCHBURG NEWS AND ADVANCE**

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## **DANVILLE REGISTER AND BEE**

Virginia hires firm for uranium workgroup analysis Virginia hired a Colorado-based environmental firm to help a multi-agency workgroup analyze uranium mining and milling and associated regulatory issues. Wright Environmental Services Inc. of Fort Collins, Colo., was awarded a contract May 21 to provide expert analysis of uranium reports, existing regulatory programs and international best practices and to give ongoing technical advice to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, according to a state notice. The work would cost \$513,000, according to the firm's proposal. "We're very excited to be selected to help Virginia and the commonwealth assess the regulatory gaps that might exist if the General Assembly chooses to lift the ban," said Toby Wright, project manager and firm president. The governor tasked the state workgroup to further study uranium issues and to draft a conceptual regulatory framework to help lawmakers decide whether to lift a 30-year moratorium on uranium mining. Virginia Uranium Inc. would like to mine and mill a 119-million-pound uranium deposit at Coles Hill in Pittsylvania County. Wright said he assembled a team of experts with hundreds of years of combined experience in the area of uranium mining and milling regulatory affairs and public health. Wright Environmental made sure to include regulators who had experience "wrestling with these issues," he added.

## **CHARLOTTESVILLE DAILY PROGRESS**

Albemarle gets another 40.6-acre conservation easement Albemarle County recently acquired a 40.6-acre conservation easement near Crozet. The newest addition was made through the county's Acquisition of Conservation Easements program, bringing the total acreage under easement through the program to 7,469. The new land acquisition retires six county development rights and protects land along Stockton Creek, a tributary to the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir watershed. The land also has frontage along Interstate 64. The Board of Supervisors started the ACE program in 2000 to help preserve county open space as development accelerated. The program buys development rights in an effort to assist middle-income landowners. To date, ACE has acquired easements on 40 properties, including 3,683 acres of "prime" farm and forestland, 85,000 linear feet of streamside with buffers, and 454 acres of mountaintop.

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# MISCELLANEOUS

## **PLANETSAVE.COM**

EPA Findings Point to Water Contamination from Hydraulic Fracturing Recent U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA ) findings have raised awareness of potentially harmful levels of water contamination that may be the result of hydraulic fracturing. Lawsuits from individuals who believe their water has been contaminated by hydraulic fracturing are coming in all across the country and support for stricter regulations is growing.

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Just to give you a real quick explanation of what hydraulic fracturing (fracking) is, here is a quick and dirty summary: Fracking involves a process where fluids, sand, and toxic chemicals, are pumped deep underground at a very high rate of pressure. The pressure creates tiny fissures in the surrounding rock and forces natural gas out of shale rock deposits. Much of the toxic water mixture sent down during this process eventually finds its way into surrounding groundwater systems.

In December of 2011, the EPA linked aquifer contamination in a small Wyoming town to natural gas drilling activities including hydraulic fracturing. These findings by the EPA were a major step forward in terms of bringing awareness to the serious situation. Residents of Dimock Pennsylvania, an area that experienced an upsurge in natural gas drilling, have been living with contaminated water for years as a result of hydraulic fracturing in the area. Water tests of Dimock residents analyzed by the EPA have found toxic levels of barium, arsenic, manganese, and glycol compounds among other contaminants.

"The water came out looking like coffee with milk in it," recalled one Dimock resident when asked to discuss when the water first started to change. Water wells have been found with a sufficient amount of methane for ignition by turning on the tap, as was caught in a clip from the popular *Gas Land* documentary. In the scene, a Dimock resident holds a lighter to the tap as he slowly turns on the water, and a fire ball shoots up from the ignited methane. Residents continue to battle contamination and the EPA has stepped in to launch a new investigation of its own into water contamination.

A separate investigation into wastewater from fracking in West Virginia national forest provided some startling results. Wastewater quickly wiped out all living vegetation, caused radical changes in the soil chemistry, and killed over 150 trees, creating a host of environmental pollution issues.

These newest government reports and investigations are an important part of an ever growing body of evidence showing hydraulic fracturing as a source of

chemical contamination among others in local supplies of water. It is extremely important that this issue is followed up closely and it is good to see that increasing awareness is spreading quickly. These methods of natural gas extraction have introduced many downfalls and it is time for a newer, cleaner, safer way to develop for extraction. Everyone deserves clean water and although the push-back on regulations and investigation will be great coming from the oil and gas industry, it is absolutely necessary.

For more, here's a [YouTube video on the matter](#).

*Photo Credit: Some rights reserved by [Owen Crowley](#)*

*Written by Steve Allen, who also writes for [TheEnvironmentalBlog.org](#)*

Source: [Planetsave](#) (<http://s.tt/1cWCP>)

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## **BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT**

Inspector General Faults EPA Over Inaction on Pharmaceutical Waste EPA comes in for criticism by the Office of Inspector General for its oversight of hazardous waste pharmaceuticals. The inspector general says unknown but dangerous hazardous waste pharmaceuticals may have been unsafely disposed of and released into the environment due to “inaction” by EPA. The inspector general recommends EPA identify and review existing pharmaceuticals to see if any qualify as hazardous waste, establish a procedure for reviewing new pharmaceuticals to see if they qualify as hazardous waste, and conduct a national outreach and compliance program to ensure hazardous waste pharmaceuticals are disposed of properly.

IEA Issues ‘Golden Rules’ to Guide Producers of Unconventional Gas Worldwide production of unconventional gas could more than triple in the next 25 years if producers follow certain good-conduct rules to address public concerns about environmental and other risks, the International Energy Agency says. In its report, Golden Rules for a Golden Age of Gas, the IEA says production of unconventional gas, primarily shale gas, could rise to some 1.6 trillion cubic meters by 2035, with China a major producer and the United States a net exporter of gas. The report says this “gas revolution” could boost economies, create jobs, and slightly reduce energy-related greenhouse gas emissions.

## **HOUSTON CHRONICLE**

Drilling boom spurring clean up push WASHINGTON — The oil and gas drilling boom that has sent thousands of workers and rigs into North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Arkansas and Texas now is spurring another gold rush, as companies jockey to clean up the briny, metal-laden water that pours out of wells nationwide. The potential prize is huge, because the hydraulic fracturing process that is key to unlocking new oil and natural gas reserves involves blasting millions of gallons of water, along with sand and chemicals, deep underground to break up dense rock formations and unlock the hydrocarbons trapped inside. Mounting concerns about the high water demands of fracturing in arid regions and the risks of earthquakes tied to underground injection wells used to dispose of wastewater from the work are driving energy producers to reuse more of the fluids. This has prompted a scramble among recycling companies to gain a foothold in the new market. They’re pushing various technologies for removing contaminants from water before it is pumped into the ground at wells and clean it up after the jobs are done. About a third of the water used in fracturing emerges as flowback before a well starts producing, and more comes later from the formation itself as what the industry calls “produced water.” Although smaller in quantity, it tends to be dirtier than flowback. “This is a billion-dollar game of musical chairs,” said Todd Asmuth, CEO of Madison, Wis.-based AquaMost, one of the companies pioneering technology for stripping contaminants out of water that emerges from fractured wells. “There’s a lot of players out there with technology solutions, and the producers want to have a couple of solutions in hand. But the music is still going on. At some point the music is going to stop and there’s going to be a lot fewer players out there, and it’s a question of who is linked up with the right producers and what the regulatory changes are.”

## **BLOOMBERG NEWS SERVICE**

Natural Gas Golden Age is Threatened by Pollution, IEA Says A tripling of natural-gas production from unconventional sources, such as shale formations, will only happen if environmental concerns are addressed, according to the International Energy Agency. Annual extraction from unconventional resources may rise to 1.6 trillion cubic meters in

2035 to account for 32 percent of all gas production, up from 14 percent this year, the IEA said in an e-mailed report released today. That figure will only be reached if companies and regulators are transparent, monitor environmental impacts and take the concerns of local communities seriously, according to the report. "The concerns of local communities are legitimate ones," Fatih Birol, chief economist at the IEA in Paris, said in a telephone interview yesterday. "There are some companies that are following the rules we are suggesting here. The destiny of the shale-gas industry will be decided not by the best practices but by the worst practices." Hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, the practice of pumping water, sand and chemicals into wells to extract gas from hard- to-exploit shale rock, helped the U.S. overtake Russia as the world's biggest producer of the fuel. The global potential of shale resources has been stymied after France and Bulgaria banned the practice and activity was suspended in the U.K. More than 20 towns in New York state have adopted laws to ban drilling, according to Karen Edelstein, a geographic information-systems consultant in Ithaca, New York.

## ***NEW YORK TIMES***

In coal country, fighting for the industry's future LOUISA, Ky. -- For generations, coal has been king in this Appalachian town. It provided heat, light and jobs for the hundreds of people who worked in the nearby coal mines and the smoke-coughing Big Sandy power plant that burned their black bounty. But now, coal is in a corner. Across the United States, the industry is under siege, threatened by new regulations from Washington, environmentalists fortified by money from New York City's billionaire Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and natural gas firms intent on capturing much of the nation's energy market. So when the operator of the Big Sandy plant announced last year that it would be switching from coal to cleaner, cheaper natural gas, people in Louisa took it as the worst betrayal imaginable. "Have you lost your mind?" Democratic state Rep. Rocky Adkins, one of Kentucky's most powerful politicians, thundered at Michael G. Morris, the chairman of the plant's operator, American Electric Power, during an encounter last summer. "You cannot wave the white flag and let the environmentalists and regulators declare victory here in the heart of coal country." Coal and electric utilities, long allied, are starting to split. More than 100 of the 500 or so U.S. coal-burning power plants are expected to be shut down in the next few years. While coal still provides about a third of the nation's power, just four years ago it was providing nearly half. The decline is largely because new pollution rules have made coal plants more costly, while a natural gas production surge through hydraulic fracturing, known as fracking, has sent gas prices plummeting. Together, the economics of coal have been transformed after a century of dominance in Washington, state capitals and the board rooms of electric utilities.